

MEETING OF THE DIOCESAN COUNCIL OF THE DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST

Chicago, Illinois • 29 November 2017

I. OPENING

The meeting, convened at the Holiday Inn Midway, opened with the singing of “O Heavenly King,” led by His Grace, Bishop Paul, at 10:08 a.m.

II. ATTENDANCE.

Present from the Diocesan Council were Bishop Paul; Archpriest John Zdinak, Chancellor; Robert Koncel, Treasurer; Archpriests James Dank and Alexander Kuchta; Priests Nicholas Finley and Herman Kincaid; Protodeacon George Potym; James Emrick, Elyn Gilette, Robert Graban and Simeon Morbey. Present from the Bishop’s Council were Archpriests Theodore Bobosh, Andrew Clements, Thomas Mueller, Timothy Sawchak, Paul Wesche, and Andrew Yavornitzky. Also present was Philip Sokolov, Bishop Paul’s Secretary.

Absent were Archpriest John Matusiak, Diocesan Secretary; Dennis Garlick; and Carrie Sabourin.

III. SCRIPTURE READINGS.

Father Finley read the day’s selection from the Epistles – 1 Timothy 1:18-20, 2:8-15 -- while Father Kincaid read the day’s Gospel reading – Luke 20:1-8. Reflections on the Epistle were offered by Fathers Mueller and Wesche.

IV. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as presented.

V. BISHOP’S REPORT.

Bishop Paul reported that he has attended a number of parish 100th anniversary celebrations in Lakewood, OH; Overland Park, KS; Mogadore, OH; and Campbell, OH. He also attended the 90th anniversary in Milwaukee.

Deacon Christopher Moore, Indianapolis, IN, was ordained to the priesthood. He will serve as an OCMC missionary.

The ordination of Deacon John Segvich, a special one-year student at Saint Tikhon’s Seminary, will take place at Saint Luke Church, Palos Hills, IL in January. Johnathon Sauer and James Mullin will be ordained to the diaconate soon.

He further reported on the Youth “Walk-In” event held 20 October, with some 60 youth participating at three sites throughout the diocese – Minneapolis, MN; Palos Hills, IL; and Overland Park, KS. The first-ever event was well received by participants, who explored ways to make the youth ideas from the 18th All-American Council a reality.

A similar event is being planned for February 2018, with a further site in Detroit.

He reported that he has been appointed Chair of the Spiritual Abuse Task Force brought up at the 18th All-American Council.

The Task Force is developing draft documents that will be discussed at upcoming deanery meetings.

Bishop Paul noted that the diocese should form a committee to mark the 50th Anniversary of autocephaly in 2020.

He further reported that the Holy Synod will submit a resolution to the 19th All-American Council changing the timing of AACs from every three to every four years.

In conclusion, Bishop Paul expressed his desire that deaneries take increasing responsibility for mission work in their respective regions.

VI. CHANCELLOR’S REPORT.

Father Zdinak reported that new members are needed for the Finance Committee. Simeon Morbey was asked to serve and agreed to do so, while Father Kincaid and Mr. Graban volunteered their services.

He reminded Council members that the 2018 Diocesan Assembly will be separate from the AAC. It will be held October 8-10. The agenda will include new proposed Diocesan By-Laws and proportional support of the Diocese to replace the “head tax.”

Father Kuchta motioned, seconded by Father Dank, “that a task force be formed to define the Diocesan Parish/Mission Development Fund and to examine means of increasing its holdings.” Mr. Morbey motioned that the wording be amended to read, “Whereas the Diocesan Council has decided that the 11 October 2017 motion needs to be revisited, the Diocesan Council shall establish a task force to recommended parameters for the FUND.” Seconded by Mr. Emrick. The motion carried as amended with one nay.

He reported that the Revised Clergy Compensation Guidelines are being developed and will be circulated when finalized and blessed by Bishop Paul.

Finally, Father Zdinak announced that parishes will be receiving assessment invoices for the 19th AAC. The diocese has to pay the full amount to the OCA, so all parishes are asked to comply.

VII. DEANERY REPORTS.

A. Chicago Deanery. Father Mueller reported that Priest Esteban Vázquez will be assigned to Summit, IL. He speaks Spanish, which will enable him to gradually minister to the wider community, with the will of the parish. The diocese will supplement his salary by \$10,000.00 per year.

B. Cleveland Deanery. Father Clements reported that “Catechism of the Good Shepherd” program will be held for deanery children this summer to intimately familiarize them with Liturgy.

C. Kansas City Deanery. Father Sawchak reported that Joy of All Who Sorrow Mission, Ash Grove, MO has been elevated to parish status.

With regard to Presentation Monastery, Marshfield, MO: It was reported that the nuns do not have the ability to maintain the property and will be relocating to Holy Archangel Michael and All Angels Skete, Weatherby, MO, to be near their spiritual father, Hieromonk Alexii [Altschul]. Mother Sergia will pay the mortgage, which is in her name, for two more months. Bishop Paul said that he would like to see the property remain in the diocese. Clergy in the area have met to discuss possibilities. Saint Thomas Church, Springfield, MO made a proposal to take over the property. They will continue the candlemaking business. Matushka Cynthia Bodnar will be the temporary administrator and candlemaker until the Springfield parish takes over. Saint Thomas parish will be responsible for paying the loan. The property will transition on 30 January 2018, while the parish will take over the candle-making enterprise on 30 April. A couple will live on the property as caretakers.

Father Kincaid motioned, seconded by Mr. Emrick, “that the loan be capped at \$5,000.00.” Carried.

D. Michigan Deanery. Father Yavornitzky reported that work continues at Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral, Detroit. We are in our second year of sponsoring Father Paul Albert’s ministry there.

E. Minneapolis Deanery. Father Wesche reported that in September, he was asked by Bishop Paul to secure the services of a title company to verify ownership of the property on which the old Saints Peter and Paul Church in Bramble, MN stands. The church has been closed for many decades; services are held once each year. The property also possesses a cemetery. Ownership has been uncertain and controversial, as is the status of the church. Father Wesche reported that records are in short supply. A title report, which cost \$125.00, concluded that no viable parish exists and that the diocese does not own the property.

F. Indianapolis Deanery. No report.

VIII. METROPOLITAN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES’ REPORT.

No new report.

IX. TREASURER’S REPORT.

Mr. Koncel reported that there are a few discrepancies in the report due to the accountant not allocating expenses. We will have to hire a new accountant if his performance does not improve.

The Diocese Parish/Mission Development Fund has increased from \$509,069.00 as of the last meeting to \$525,997.51 as of today’s meeting.

He further reported that according to our December 2015 meeting, the \$5,000.00 per year for Joseph Kormos was supposed to have come out of the Mission Development Fund, with the other \$5,000.00 derived from the Mission Grants line of the budget. However, the former sum also had been taken out of the budget. Bishop Paul and Father Mueller will follow up on this matter.

X. NEW BUSINESS.

Concerning the 50th Anniversary of the granting of autocephaly in 2020, it was proposed that Deanery-wide Hierarchical Divine Liturgies be celebrated in each deanery, followed by picnics or similar gatherings. Articles and reflections will be gathered. A committee will be formed to pursue organizational matters, the membership of which will include Archpriest Thaddeus Wojcik, one Dean [Father Wesche] and one Diocesan Council member [Father Dank].

XI. ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned with the singing of the Hymn to the Theotokos at 1:52 p.m. upon motion by Mr. Morbey, seconded by Ms. Gillette.

*Respectfully submitted,
Mr. Philip Sokolov with Archpriest John Matusiak, Diocesan Secretary*